



Statement from Commissioner David C. Hespe on His Resignation as Education Commissioner

For Immediate Release

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"We are entering another school year, which represents a time of transition for thousands of students. Just as they will be embarking on a new stage of life, I have decided that the time is right for me to do the same. Over the coming weeks, the Department of Education will be transitioning to a new Commissioner, as I will be stepping down from the Office of Commissioner of Education at the end of September.

"I would like to thank Governor Chris Christie for his educational vision and leadership, and for his support and confidence in the Department as we implemented a number of very difficult but extremely impactful initiatives that continue to improve the education for our children, empower educators, and make our schools more effective.

"This Administration promised parents that we would make certain that when their children graduate from high school they would be ready for the challenges of college and careers.

"We aligned our New Jersey home grown learning standards, developed by New Jersey parents and educators, with the expectations of college classrooms and the work place in mind. We developed a new computer-based, 21st Century test to measure progress against the depth and breadth of the standards.

"We committed to making quality tools available to educators so that the PARCC data becomes a key part of the learning process that will help students. We trained educators and parents in how to use this new information to understand the academic needs of individual students and develop better instructional strategies. We promised to get the data back to schools by the end of the last school year and into the hands of parents at the beginning of the new school year. I am pleased to say today that along the way we have accomplished all of these goals.

"We have also taken on the challenges of our struggling urban districts by implementing school and student focused reforms. We have added thousands of high-quality Charter School and Renaissance School seats, providing children in struggling districts with a better chance at success in life. We are now translating these reforms into a vision for returning our state operated districts to local control.

"We have expanded our early childhood programs to serve thousands of additional students. We have freed high-performing districts from burdensome regulations, as hundreds of school districts have been granted waivers from elements of the QSAC monitoring process that didn't match their needs. We have implemented a best practice driven evaluation system for teachers and school leaders to support growth and professional development. Thanks to this educator improvement system, teachers are receiving more observations and valuable feedback than ever before.

"We have also formed stronger and more meaningful partnerships with school leaders and teachers, with parents, and with the higher education and business communities. The strength of these relationships will continue far into the future and will lead to even more learning dividends for our children.

"I take with me countless fond memories from over the past 30 months of numerous friendships forged, often under trying circumstances, with so many in the education community. These friendships will be everlasting.

"I will leave with a sense of pride at all that we have accomplished together over the past few years. Together we have improved learning for school children throughout the state of New Jersey."